A

SERMON

Preached before the

QUEEN

AT

WHITE-HALL,

March the 13th 169½.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
EDWARD, Lord Biſhop of *Worceſter*.

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Romans VIII. 6.

For, to be carnally minded is Death; but to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.

IN theſe Words is imply'd a Diſtribution of Mankind into thoſe who are *carnally* and *ſpiritually minded*; which Diſtinction is ſo Large and Comprehenſive, as to take in all ſorts and conditions of Men; and of ſo great Moment and Importance, that their *Life* or *Death*, *Happineſs* or *Miſery depend* upon it. But, conſidering the Mixture of Good and Evil in Mankind, it is not an eaſie matter to ſet the Bounds of the *carnal and ſpiritual Mind*; and conſidering the frequent Impunity and Security of bad Men, and the Fears and Troubles, which the beſt are not exempted from, it ſeems next to impoſſible to make out (at leaſt as to this Life) that *to be carnally minded is Death, but to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.* Yet, our Apoſtle doth not ſeem to confine the Conſequences here

mention'd to another World, (although the full Accompliſhment of them be only there to be expected;) but if we attend to his Scope and Deſign in the end of the foregoing Chapter, and the Beginning of this, we ſhall find that even in this Life the Reſult of a *carnal Mind* is a ſort of Spiritual *Death*; and of a Spiritual Mind is *Life and Peace*: For, when S. *Paul* in the 7th Chapter had Repreſented
Rom. 7. 14. himſelf as *Carnal and ſold under Sin*, although there were great Strugglings between the Convictions of his Conſcience, and the Strength of Carnal Inclinations; yet, as long as the latter prevailed ſo that *he could not do the things* that his Mind and Reaſon told him
19, 20. he ought to do; but *did thoſe things which he* was convinced *he ought not to have done*: The more he Reflected upon himſelf, the more Sad and Miſerable he found his Condition to be, as appears by that Emphatical Expreſſion which follow'd upon it, *O wretch-*
7. 24. *ed man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* But he no ſooner finds hopes of Delivery and Eſcape out of that Eſtate, but he breaks forth into a Tran-
25. ſport of Joy and inward Satisfaction. *Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through Jeſus*

Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Not meerly a *Victory* over *Death*, but over *Sin* too: And ſo he begins this Chapter after a triumphant manner; *There is therefore no Condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus; who walk not* 8. 1. *after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit. For the Lord of the Spirit of Life which was in Chriſt* 2. *Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death:* He that groaned under his *Captivity* before to *the Law of Sin*, doth now rejoyce in his *Deliverance* from it by the Grace of the Goſpel. For, what could not be done by Natural Freedom, by the Power of the Law and the Force of Reaſon, is brought to paſs by the Aſſiſtance of Divine Grace given to the Souls of Men by *Jeſus Chriſt. For what the Law could not do in that it was* 3. *weak through the Fleſh:* What was that which the Law could not do? It could Awaken, Convince, Terrifie and Confound the Conſciences of Sinners under the Senſe and Apprehenſion of their Sins; but it could neither Satisfie the Juſtice of God, nor the Minds of Men; it could not Remove the Guilt, nor take away the Force and Power of Sin. But *God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinfull Fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the Fleſh;*

Fleſh; i. e. *Jeſus Chriſt* becoming an Expiatory Sacrifice for Sin, took off the damning Power of Sin; and by the prevailing Efficacy of his Grace ſubdued the Strength and Force of it to ſuch a degree, *That the Righte-*
4. *ouſneſs of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Fleſh but after the Spirit.* How could this be, if S. *Paul* ſtill conſidered himſelf in the ſame Condition he did in the foregoing Chapter? For if he were ſtill *in Captivity to the Law of Sin in his Members*, how was it poſſible that *the Righteouſneſs of the Law ſhould be fulfilled in him?* How could he *walk not after the Fleſh but after the Spirit, if the Good which he would he did not, and the Evil which he would not that he did?* For theſe things are ſo repugnant to each other, that when they are ſpoken of the ſame Perſon, it muſt be under different Conſiderations; the one of him, as meerly under *the Power* of the *Law*; the other, as under the *Grace and Influence of the Goſpel.* The one was like Rough and a Churliſh ſort of Phyſick, which ſearches into every Part, and puts all the ill Humours of the Body into Motion, and makes a general Diſturbance and Uneaſineſs within, but yet lets them remain where they

were;

were ; the other is like a gentle but more Effectual Remedy, which carries off the Strength and Power of inward Corruptions, and alters the Habit and Temper, and puts quite another Diſpoſition into us, which produces very different Effects upon us. For, inſtead of Horrour and Deſpair, and inward Anguiſh and Confuſion, there will follow a New Life of Joy and Peace here, and Eternal Happineſs hereafter.

And this is what the Apoſtle means in the Words of the Text ; *To be carnally minded*, &c. Wherein are two things, which very much deſerve our Conſideration.

I. The different Tempers of Mens Minds ; ſome are *Carnally* and others *Spiritually minded*.

II. The different Conſequences which follow them : *To be carnally minded is Death ; but to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.*

I. The different Tempers of Mens Minds. The different Denominations are taken from *the Fleſh* and *the Spirit* ; which are here repreſented as two Principles ſo different from each other, that the ſame Perſon cannot be ſuppoſed to be acted by both of them. For, as the *Apoſtle* ſaith in the foregoing Words,

They

Ver. 5. *They that are after the Fleſh do mind the things of the Fleſh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* Where *the Fleſh*, in a Moral Senſe, takes in all our Senſual Inclinations which are Sinfull either in their Nature or Degree. *The Spirit* is that Divine Principle, which poſſeſſes the Mind with the Love and Eſteem of Spiritual things, and keeps our Natural Inclinations within the Compaſs of God's Law. To be *carnally minded*, is to be under the Influence of *Carnal things*, ſo as to make the Purſuit of them our Chief Deſign: To be *ſpiritually minded* is to have ſo deep and juſt a Senſe of God and his Law upon our Minds, as to make it our buſineſs to Pleaſe him, and therefore to Subdue all ſuch Inclinations which are repugnant to his Will.

But here lies the main Difficulty; how to Judge concerning this matter ſo, as to be able to Determine whether we our ſelves be *carnally* or *ſpiritually minded.* Which is a thing of ſo great Conſequence for us to know, that the Peace of our Minds, the true Comfort of our Lives, our due Preparation for Death, and a Happy Eternity, do all depend upon it. And yet that this is a real Difficulty will appear from theſe Conſiderations.

(1.) It

(1.) It requires a greater Knowledge of our Selves (as to our Spiritual Condition) than moſt Perſons in the World can pretend to. For it is not a ſlight and ſuperficial View of our Selves, not a tranſient, ſudden Reflection, nor a partial Inquiry into our inward Paſſions, and the Courſe of our Actions, which can make us capable of paſſing a true Judgment upon the Temper of our Minds; but there muſt be a true Light, a ſerious and diligent Search, frequent Recollection, free and deliberate Thoughts, long Obſervation and due Compariſon of our Selves with our Selves and with the Law of God, before we can form a juſt Opinion as to the prevailing Temper and Diſpoſition of our Minds.

It's true, this is not neceſſary in all Perſons; for ſome (and I am afraid too many) are ſo *carnally minded*, that the leaſt Reflection or Conſideration would make them ſee how bad their condition is. For, they have no true Senſe of God or Religion at all; they have no ſerious thoughts or apprehenſions of Divine and Spiritual Things; this World they pretend to know ſomething of, and have too great an Eſteem of the Vanities and Pleaſures of it; for theſe wholly take

up their Hearts and Time; and they have a ſavour and reliſh for any thing that tends to their Greatneſs or Honour or Entertainment of their Appetites or Fancies here; but if we ſpeak to them of another World, of God and Heaven and a Spiritual Diſpoſition of Soul; either they look on us with Amazement, as if they were Inſenſible of ſuch things; or elſe with Scorn and Contempt, as if we went about to Deceive them. Alas! They are too Wiſe to be impoſed upon by us; and they have other things to mind (I am ſure not greater or weightier) which take up all their Time; and ſo what through the Buſineſs and the Impertinencies of this World, their *Time paſſeth away as a Tale that is told*; and as though it were a very pleaſant *Tale*, they are troubled only to think it will be ſo ſoon at an End. But theſe are not the Perſons, who require any ſuch Care to paſs a right Judgment upon them; for they can pretend to nothing that is *Spiritual*, as to the Tempers and Diſpoſitions of their Minds; and therefore ſuch as theſe muſt be ſet aſide, for it is too apparent that they are only *ſenſual* and *carnally minded*.

But

But as the *Papiſts* diſtinguiſh of *the Body of Chriſt*, ſo may we of the *Carnal Mind*; there is a groſs and *Capernaitical* Senſe; and there is a more refined and (if I may uſe the Expreſſion) a more *Spiritual* Senſe of it. For although it be a great Abſurdity in them to ſuppoſe that a meer Body can be after *the Manner of a Spirit*; yet it is not ſo to ſuppoſe a *Carnal Mind* to have a Mixture of ſome Spiritual Qualities and Diſpoſitions in it. And this makes the difference ſo much harder to be perceived between the *carnally* and *ſpiritually minded*; ſince there are the ſame Faculties of Perception, Reaſoning, and Application in both; and the ſame common Principles of Religion may be owned by both; which may in Reaſon be ſuppoſed to make ſome Impreſſion on the Minds of the more Ingenuous part of Mankind, who are not given over to ſuch a *Reprobate Senſe* as the former were. Now, how to diſtinguiſh between frequent good Impreſſions on the Mind, and an Habitual Temper and Diſpoſition, is not ſo eaſie to all who are concerned to diſtinguiſh them. And yet a Perſon may be throughly convinced of his Sins, and Tremble at the Apprehenſion of the

Juſtice and Severity of God againſt them; he may have many Checks and Reluctancies of Conſcience while he goes on to commit them; he may Sigh and Groan and Lament under the wretchedneſs of his Condition by his Love of Sin; and yet may love his Sins all the while more than God or Heaven, or any thing in Competition with them. The difference doth not lie in the Nature or Number of the Impreſſions from without, but in the inward Principle of Action. A Ciſtern may be full of Water falling down from Heaven, which may run as long as that holds which fell into it; but a Spring hath it riſing up within, and ſo continues running when the other is ſpent. A *carnal Mind* may have many Spiritual Convictions, and good Motions and Inclinations; but after a time they wear off and leave no laſting Effect behind them; but where there is a Spring in the Soul, there is a freſh and continual Supply of ſuch Inclinations, as keep up a conſtant Courſe of a Spiritual Life; which our *Saviour* calls *Rivers of living Water.*

Joh. 7. 38.

I confeſs it is hard to determine what a *Habit* or *Principle* abiding in our Minds is; yet

yet the *Scripture* doth evidently ſuppoſe ſuch a thing, when it ſpeaks of the *New Birth*, and the *New Life*, and *the New Creature*, and *the Children of God*; all which are very inſignificant Terms, if there be not under them ſomething anſwerable to the *Firſt Principles* of *Life*; and if there be not a Divine Spirit dwelling and acting in the Souls of Good Men, and raiſing them up above Carnal and Senſual Objects to things Divine and Spiritual, and carrying them through the Paſſage of this World ſo as to prepare them for a better. But yet there may be many things which carry ſome Reſemblance to this *Principle* within, which come not up to it. There may be ſuch Principles of Education and good Manners, ſuch Awakenings of Conſcience, ſuch a Strength of Natural Reaſon and Common Ingenuity, as may carry one on to do ſome very Good things, and yet he may fall ſhort of having a true Principle of Spiritual Life in him. But then, there muſt be another Principle within, which contradicts this, and prevails over it, and carries him on to the Love of Sin, which proves too ſtrong for the Love of God and the due Regard to Spiritual things.

Joh. 3. 3, 6. 1. 13.

Rom. 8. 8, 9. 2 Cor. 5. 17. 1 Joh. 3. 9, 10.

The

The Reſult of this Diſcourſe is, ſince the *Carnal Mind* is not to be taken meerly for ſuch a one which ſtands out in Oppoſition to the Goſpel, nor for ſuch a one which is Inſenſible of *Spiritual* things; but ſuch as may conſiſt with a Common Profeſſion of Religion, and have the ſame Convictions and good Impreſſions which others have; it doth require a more than ordinary Acquaintance with our Selves to be able to judge aright, whether the Temper of our Minds be *Carnal* or *Spiritual.*

2. But this is not all; for, ſince there is ſo great a Mixture of Good and Evil in the better ſort of Mankind, there is required not barely Knowledge of our Selves, but a good Judgment too to adjuſt the Proportions of Good and Evil in Particular Perſons, ſo as to be able to judge whether we are *Carnally* or *Spiritually minded.* For, as thoſe who are *Carnal*, while they follow their Carnal Inclinations, may have many inward Strugglings by Spiritual Convictions; ſo thoſe who are *Spiritually minded* may meet with many Combats from the Fleſh, which may be Troubleſome, where it cannot prevail. But there is a great difference between the

the *Spirit* ſtruggling againſt the *Fleſh* in the *Carnally minded*, and the *Fleſh* ſtruggling againſt the *Spirit* in thoſe who are *Spiritually minded.* For, where there is no perfect Victory, there will be ſome Oppoſition; and the beſt have ſo many Failings to complain of in this World; ſo many Infirmities and Defects in their good Actions; ſo many Paſſions not brought into their due Order; ſo many Omiſſions of Perſonal and Relative Duties; ſuch variety of Tempers and Weakneſs of Reſolution; ſuch Coldneſs in Devotion and Unreaſonable Dejections of Mind; ſo many unaccountable Fears and ſuch dreadfull Apprehenſions of Death and the Conſequences of it; that theſe things muſt make great Abatements as to ſuch as are truly *Spiritually minded.*

But by all theſe things the Difficulty ſtill increaſeth, and therefore it is time to come to the Reſolution of it; and that will be by ſhewing that the Difference between the *Carnal* and *Spiritual Mind* lies in theſe three Things:

1. In

1. In the Deliberate Judgment and Choice.
2. In the Prevailing Intereſt.
3. In the Conſtant Rule and Meaſure of Actions.

1. In the deliberate Judgment and Choice. For the main difference as to the *Carnal* and *Spiritual Mind*, lies in the different End which is aimed at by them. Where the Chief End is the Pleaſing our Selves, and the enjoying of any thing as our Happineſs under the *Supream Good*, whatever Thoughts and Intentions we may at ſome times have, to Repent of our Sins, and turn our Souls from the Love of Sin to the Love of God, as long as we continue purſuing a wrong End, we have too great Reaſon to conclude our Minds to be yet *carnal and ſold under ſin*. For while the *Apoſtle* repreſents himſelf ſo, he tells us he had his Conſcience throughly awakened with the Senſe of his ſins, even of thoſe which the World is leaſt apt to be ſenſible of, *inward* and *ſecret Sins*; he was not only convinced of the *Excellency* and *Purity* of the Law, but had ſome *Pleaſure* and Satisfaction in it; he had ſome hearty deſires to be rid of his beloved Sins; but yet they were

Rom. 7. 7, 8, 9. 12. 14. 22.

were too hard for him, he ſighed and lamented under his deplorable Condition; but 'till the *Grace of God* came to ſet him free, he was in a miſerable and hopeleſs State.

But how is it, that the Grace of God thus refines and purifies the minds of Men, ſo as of *Carnal* to make them *Spiritual*, when the ſame Paſſions and Inclinations remain? A Change there muſt be, and that real and ſpiritual, and therefore in our beſt Faculties, *viz.* our Underſtandings and our Wills; not by a Revelation of New Objects to the Mind, nor by offering any Force upon the Will; but by fixing the Judgment of the Mind and the Choice of the Will upon the beſt and moſt deſirable Object, which is God himſelf, as the *Supreme Good*. The Turn of the Soul which makes one *Spiritually minded*, muſt not be only from groſs and ſenſual Inclinations, but from every other kind of Good, which ſtands in Competition with the Supreme. A truly *Spiritual Mind* is one that is poſſeſſed with the Love of God above all, and that values other things, as they tend to the Enjoyment of Him. God muſt be the only Center of his Hopes

and Deſigns; for in him alone his true Happineſs conſiſts: As the Pſalmiſt expreſſes it;
Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth I deſire beſides thee.* Whatever falls ſhort of this, may agree to a *carnal Mind*; but a *Carnal Mind* can never love God as he ought to be loved; not with a Supreme tranſcendent Degree of Love, which is alone proper and ſuitable to him. All other kind of Love is beneath his Infinite Goodneſs and Perfections; and to love him as we do his Creatures, is to do him the greateſt Diſhonour, for it levels their Perfections, and ſuppoſes them to deſerve the ſame Degree of Affection from us.

But there may be many *Spiritual Notions* in Mens minds about God and Religion; about Myſtical Unions, and the Participations of Divine Love; many ſeeming Spiritual Raptures and Ecſtaſies, and yet there may not be this *Spiritual Mind.* For the Heats of Enthuſiaſm may ſeem to be very *Spiritual*, but are of another kind; they are *Spiritual*, as they are the Effects of a great heating of the *Spirits* by the Force of a vehement Imagination; which hath been often accompanied with as vehement an Inclination to Senſual Plea-

Pleaſures; which ſhews the plain Difference between an *Exalted Fancy* and a *Spiritual Mind.*

A *Spiritual Mind* is ſuch a one as is not only throughly convinced of the Reality of Spiritual things; but of their Excellency and Deſirableneſs, above any others that can be offer'd to our Choice. It ſees through all the Glittering Vanities of this World; and ſoars above the moſt tempting and bewitching Follies of Mankind here: It frequently retires from the Noiſe and Confuſion, the Hurry and Vexation of Worldly Affairs, that it may converſe more freely with Inviſible Objects; not meerly by way of Contemplation, but by raiſing the Affections of the Soul towards them, as the things which it hath choſen for its Happineſs.

And this makes a wonderfull Alteration in the thoughts that theſe Different Tempers have concerning the ſame things. I do not deny but thoſe who have carnal Minds may have ſome raiſed and ſpiritual Thoughts, but they are too cold and ſpeculative; they may have noble and refined Speculations about the Inviſible World; may be fully convin-

ced that the things *which are ſeen*, could not be what they are, were it not for the things which *are not ſeen*; and that the things which *are not ſeen*, are of incomparably greater value than thoſe which are ſo much more admired, becauſe *they are ſeen.* But we muſt not conclude, that becauſe men do really believe *Spiritual* things, therefore they are *ſpiritually minded*, (for that were to ſuppoſe all to be *Saints* who are not *Atheiſts*;) but there muſt be ſuch a due Preference in our Minds, of that Inviſible and Eternal State, above all that is accounted Great and Deſirable here, as gives a juſt Denomination to one that he is *Spiritually minded*; i. e. that his Mind and Soul is fixed upon another World as his proper Happineſs, and other things are regarded and valued in Subſerviency to it.

2. A Spiritual Mind is diſcerned by the *Prevailing Intereſt.* For, as long as we are made up of *Fleſh* and *Spirit*, there will and muſt be a Combat between them: *For the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh; and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would:* And yet the ſame Apoſtle

Gal. 5. 17.

ſoon

ſoon after adds, *They that are Chriſt's have crucified the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts*; 24.
the Meaning is, that, in ſome particular Inſtances and leſs remarkable Caſes, the *Fleſh* may ſometimes be too hard for the *Spirit*; but in all Notorious Inſtances of the *Luſts of the Fleſh*, which he reckons up; and in the main Iſſue of all leſſer Combats the *Spirit* will be too hard for the *Fleſh* in thoſe who are *ſpiritually minded*; as the *Fleſh* will be too hard for the *Spirit* at laſt in thoſe who are *carnally minded*. If we look on them in the time of the Combat, it will be hard to judge which is moſt likely to prevail; but thoſe may have the better in ſome particular Skirmiſhes, who may loſe very much in the State of the War; a Good Man may be foiled by Surpriſe or under ſome diſadvantage, but he will recover himſelf, and, it may be, gain Ground by his Falls; and a bad Man may in ſome fits of Devotion ſeem ſo *ſpiritually minded*, that one might be apt to think he were quite changed, 'till he returns to his former Practices. If we had been to judge of *Ahab* in the time of his Humiliation; and of *David* in the time of his Impenitency after his Sins of Adultery

dultery and Murther, we ſhould have thought in common Juſtice and Charity, the latter had been the *carnal*, and the former the *ſpiritual-minded* man. But it was quite otherwiſe; which ſhews that we are not to judge of Mens Spiritual Condition by ſudden and violent Motions whether good or bad; but by that Intereſt which prevails with them in the whole Courſe of their Lives. To give a general Character of a Man from ſome Violent Paſſion againſt the Tenour of his Life, would be like drawing the Picture of a Man in a Fit of an Epilepſy, or a Convulſive Motion of his Face. And to believe a Man to be a Good Man, becauſe he hath ſome good Moods and Paſſionate Fits of Devotion, is, as if we ſhould take a piece of rotten Wood for a true *Phoſphorus*, becauſe it ſhines ſometimes; or ſuppoſe *Judas* to be a Saint, becauſe he was ſo much in our Saviour's Company. The inward Habits and Diſpoſitions of Mens minds may be cover'd over and diſguiſed a great While; but a Tempting Occaſion lays them open; as no doubt *Judas* did not get his habit of Covetouſneſs of a ſudden, but it was ſtill growing and ripening under a fair appearance; and

and when the proper Season came, the Secret Malignity brake forth; and the Temptation of *Thirty Pieces of Silver* discover'd the Baseness and Hypocrisy of his Heart. Sometimes the Vein of Hypocrisy lies deep, and is cover'd over with such a fair outside, that no one can have Reason to mistrust it, 'till it discovers it self, and then the Corruption is found so loathsome, as to render ordinary Sincerity suspicious. But this is a common Fault, either to be too easily deceived, or too unreasonably mistrustfull; there is no certainty in a Deduction from particulars, but where the Causes are Equal and Necessary. It is as absurd an Inference that there is no such thing as a *Spiritual Mind*, because some who have pretended to it have been found *Carnal*; as that there is no such thing as Common Honesty among men, because some who have long born the name of Honest men have been found great Cheats and Impostors. But when a Predominant Habit doth discover it self, the Person must bear that Title and Denomination which it gives him.

3. A *Spiritual Mind* is known by the general Conformity of Actions to a *Divine* and *Spiri-*

Spiritual Rule; and so a Carnal Mind by following the *Bent* and *Inclinations* of the *Flesh*. And there lies a great Part of the Difference; for such who lay no Restraint upon their Natural Inclinations must needs be *carnally minded*; because *the Flesh*, as S. *Chrysostom* observes, *is not taken, by S.* Paul, *meerly for the Body, but for the corrupt Part of our Selves, as consisting of Soul and Body.* It is observed by *Cicero* 3. *de Rep.* *That Mankind come into the World in a very ill Condition, with a Body naked, frail and infirm, with a Mind subject to Troubles, dejected with Fears, impatient of Labour, prone to Lust; but in the midst of all this, there is a certain Divine Flame of Wit and Understanding, which lies as it were buried and overwhelmed; but with great Care and Industry may be so preserved and improved, as to Command our Appetites and Govern our Passions.* But, alas! How little doth the Reason of Mankind signifie to the greatest Part of them? It helps them to see their Folly, and like a Sea-Light to a sinking Ship in a dark Night, makes those who are aboard, to behold their Misery, without helping them out of it. If the Frame of human Nature be considered in it self, and by way of Speculation, we have no Cause to complain of it; for as

Chrysost. in Gal. 5. 17.

Aug. c. Julian. l. 4. c. 12.

as God hath given us Inferiour Faculties ſuitable to the Conſtitution of our Bodies, ſo he hath likewiſe Superiour, which are capable of Controlling and Governing them. But when Habit and Cuſtom is joyned with a Vicious Inclination, how little doth human Reaſon ſignifie? All the Conſiderations of Natural Order, and Decency, and Regularity, and Good Example, are eaſily over-born by the ſtrong Propenſities of a Corrupt Inclination; which hurries men on to ſatisfie firſt their Brutal Appetites, and leaves Conſideration 'till afterwards. So that Reaſon ſeems by ſuch an *After-game*, rather given to Torment, than to Reform them.

Therefore the Wiſe God hath ſuperadded his own Law to inforce that of Reaſon by a greater Authority; that Men may think themſelves more concerned to take Care of their Actions, when they muſt give an Account of them to one Infinitely above them. But what can Mankind do in ſuch a Wretched Condition? For the Law of it ſelf is but like a Toyle to a wild Beaſt; the more he ſtruggles, the more he is Intangled; ſo that he ſees his Miſery by it, but not his Remedy.

But ſuch is the Goodneſs and Mercy of God towards Mankind, that he hath never

refuſed to accept thoſe, who have ſincerely endeavour'd to do his Will according to the Meaſure of that Aſſiſtance which he hath given them. Thus we find Characters of Men in all Ages, who were ſaid to be *Righteous before God, juſt and upright and perfect Men*; and yet ſome of the moſt eminent of theſe had remarkable failings, as *Noah*, *Abraham* and *Job*; yet they had extraordinary Teſtimonies of God's Approving their Integrity and paſſing by thoſe Faults which were contrary to the general Deſign and Tenour of their Lives.

Gen. 6. 9. 17. 1. Job 1. 1,2,3. Pſal. 37. 37.

I confeſs we meet with two Inſtances to the contrary in Scripture, which deſerve our Conſideration; and thoſe were of Extraordinary Perſons too, eminent for their long and faithfull Service of God; and yet upon ſingle Faults committed by them, he was very ſevere with them. Which may ſeem to take much off from this Lenity and Goodneſs of God towards ſuch who have a general Sincerity of Mind towards him. But, if we more ſtrictly conſider theſe two Caſes, we ſhall find there was ſomething very provoking in the Circumſtances of them, which made God ſo much more diſpleaſed with the Committing them. For, they were Sins committed by them, in their Publick Capacities, and about ſuch

ſuch things wherein the Honour of God was more particularly concerned.

The Firſt is the Caſe of *Moſes*, who was a great Pattern of Wiſdom and Meekneſs and Faithfulneſs, for forty years together, in the Conduct of a very froward People in the Wilderneſs; yet at laſt he happen'd to fail in ſome Part of his Duty, and *God* was ſo angry with him, that *he would not hear his Prayer for going into Canaan*, but he cut him off in the Wilderneſs at laſt, as he did the People for their Unbelief. But what was this Sin of *Moſes* which made God ſo highly diſpleaſed with him? If we read the paſſage as it is related in the Hiſtory of the Fact, it is not ſo eaſie to find it out. The People murmured for want of Water, God upon *Moſes* his Prayer commands him, to take his Rod, and in the Aſſembly of the People, *to ſpeak to the Rock* and the Water ſhould iſſue out. *Moſes* aſſembles the People, expoſtulates the matter with them, *ſtrikes the Rock twice* and the Waters came. Where is the great Sin of *Moſes* all this while? Yet, he often repeats it, that *God was angry with him* for ſomething done at that time. *God* himſelf ſaith, *Moſes and Aaron rebelled againſt him*; and that *they did not ſanctifie him* before the People: the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *they provoked*

Deut. 3. 24, 25.

Numb. 20. 2, 3, 6. 8. 10.

Deut. 1. 37. 4. 21.

Num. 27. 14.

Pſal. 106. 33.

his Spirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips. After all, the ſin of *Moſes* was a Mixture of Anger and ſome kind of Infidelity: For, the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *he was highly provoked*; Num.20.12. and *God* himſelf ſaith, *they believed him not, to ſanctifie him in the Eye of the Children of Iſrael.* The Fault then ſeems to lie in this, that they were more concerned for their own Honour than God's, and did not ſo clearly Attribute the Power of the Miracle to *God*, but that the People might think they Aſſumed it to themſelves, as appears by ver. 10. their Words to the People, *Hear now, ye Rebels, muſt we fetch you Water out of the Rock?* Which Expreſſion doth not give *God* the *Glory* he expected from them; and he is ſo tender in Matters of his own *Honour*, that he would ſuffer none to encroach upon it, no not his faithfull Servants, but he made them ſmart for attempting it.

The other caſe is that of *David's Numbering the People*; and he was *a Man after God's own Heart*, of great Sincerity and Courage and Conſtancy in his Service. Yet of a ſudden he took up a Reſolution that he would have *all the People number'd*, without any Apparent Reaſon for it. And although he was diſcouraged from the Attempt by thoſe about him,

him, yet he would be obey'd. And what came of it? Truly, before the thing was compleated he grew very uneasie at what he had done, for it is said, *His heart smote him after that he had numbred the People; and David said to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done.* 1 Sam 24.9. And yet in the Book of *Chronicles* it is said, that *he finished it not, because Wrath fell for it against Israel.* 1 Chr. 27.24. What was the Cause of all this Severity against *David?* Was it such an unpardonable Sin for a King to understand the Number of his People? Suppose it a Failing, yet why should *God* be so angry for one such Failing in him that had served *God* so sincerely as *David* had done? There must be something Extraordinary in this Case; for, *God* sometimes supposes *the People to be Number'd*; and in some Cases he requires or allows it; why then is he so displeased now at the doing it? The best Account I know of it, is this; It was not a meer piece of Vanity and Ostentation in *David*, (altho' that be Displeasing to God,) but it was a thing (as designed by him) which was generally look'd on as inconsistent with the Fundamental Promise made to *Abraham*; and so it is mention'd in the *Chronicles*, why the *Numbering* was not exactly taken, because the Lord had said *He would increase Israel like* Exod. 30.11. 38. 25. Num. 1.2,19 26. 4 1 Sam. 11.8. 2 Sam. 18. 1.

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1 Chr. 27. 23. *the Stars of the Heavens.* Which ſeems to imply that there was a general Notion received among the People, that ſince God promiſed to increaſe them *beyond Number*, no one ought to go about to take the Exact Number of them. For, this muſt ſeem to ſavour of Infidelity, and a Contempt or Miſtruſt of God's Fundamental Promiſe. But however upon ſuch Occaſions God might uſe two of his moſt faithfull Servants thus, yet we have no Reaſon to queſtion his Readineſs to pardon theſe and other their Failings upon a Sincere Repentance, and to accept of their general Care and Endeavour to Pleaſe him inſtead of a Perfect Obedience.

But I have ſomething farther to offer, for the clearing theſe two difficult Caſes, *viz.* that there is a Difference to be obſerved between the Rule of God's Proceedings with particular Perſons, as to the general Sincerity of their Actings; and the Meaſure of God's Political Juſtice as to Perſons in Publick Capacities. The Reaſon is, becauſe in the latter Caſes, God may juſtly have a Regard, not meerly to the Actions themſelves, but to the Circumſtances of the People they are related to. Thus *Moſes*, mentions it three ſeveral times, Deut. 1. 37. *The Lord was angry with me for your ſakes*; and again,

again, *the Lord was wroth with me for your ſakes and would not hear me; and the Lord ſaid unto me, Let it ſuffice thee, ſpeak no more to me of this matter.* It ſeems he was ſo much concerned as to pray to God, and that earneſtly, that he would give him leave to conduct the People into *Canaan*: but God would not grant his Requeſt. But he tells the People that it was *for their ſakes* that he was denied. *Furthermore the Lord was angry with me for your ſakes, and ſware that I ſhould not go over Jordan*, &c. So that the Blow which was given to the Head was for the ſake of the whole Body. 3. 26. 4. 21.

And it is remarkable in the Caſe of *David*, that before he fell into the Sin of Numbering the People, *The Anger of the Lord was kindled againſt Iſrael; and he moved David againſt them to ſay, Go Number Iſrael and Judah.* From whence it is evident, that the Sins of a People may provoke God to let Princes fall into ſuch Sins, which may give juſt Occaſion to God to puniſh both together. But this is a very different Caſe from the Method of God's dealings with particular Perſons with Regard to their Integrity, according to the Terms of the Covenant of Grace. Which is eſtabliſhed on ſuch Foundations, that we need not give way to Deſpondencies for the ſake of ſuch particular Acts of Severity. 2 Sam. 24. 1.

II. I am now to consider the different Consequences of these two, *To be carnally minded is Death, but to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace*; which, in short, is, that the Advantage is far greater which comes to Mankind by one than by the other.

And that will appear by comparing them together,

(1.) As under Equal Circumstances.

(2.) As under unequal Circumstances.

1. As under Equal Circumstances. And here we have two sorts of Persons to consider.

1. Those who have Convictions of Conscience going along with a *Carnal Mind*. Such who look on the Conditions of Men in this World at a Distance, and judge only by Appearance, would be apt to think that those who do allow themselves all the Liberties which a *Carnal Mind* doth incline them to, have very much the Advantage of those who are under the Restraints of a *Spiritual Mind*; for they are bound to severe Rules of Vertue and Mortification, *to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously and godly in this present World*; and these are thought to be very hard things; whereas such who are not under these Difficulties, seem to lead the most pleasant and easie Lives, enjoying

joying themselves and being full of Noise and Confidence and appear to be all Mirth and Good Humour. But there is another Account to be taken of these things: If Men could look within and see all the secret Misgivings, the inward Horrours of Conscience, the Impatience and Dissatisfaction they have, when they seriously Reflect on their evil Courses, it would quite alter their Apprehensions of these things, and make them conclude with the Roman Orator, *That one Day spent according to the Rules of Vertue were to be preferr'd before everlasting Debaucheries.* And he was no Fool, no Pedant, no mean and contemptible Person, who said this, but a Man of Wit and Sense, of Quality and Experience, who had Opportunities and Means enough to have pursued the most Sensual and Voluptuous Course of Life; which yet we see out of Judgment and Choice he despised, and preferr'd a far shorter life according to the Rules of Vertue, before a Vicious Immortality. And yet, how short were the Incouragements to a Good Life, and the Dissuasives from Sin among the best of them, in Comparison of what we all know now by the Gospel of Christ? They went no farther than meer Natural Reason and the Common Sense of Mankind carried them; but

Est autem unus dies bene & ex præceptis tuis actus peccanti immortalitati anteferendus. Cicer. *Tusc. Qu. l. 5. c. 2.*

Rom. 1. 18. 2. 5, 6. 16. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 15. 10, 11. we profeſs to believe *the Wrath of God revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs and ungodlineſs of Men*; and that there will be *a great and terrible day, wherein men muſt receive according to their Works, whether they be Good or Evil.* And will not this dreadfull Conſideration awaken the Drowſie and Secure Sinner and make him look about him betimes, while there is yet any hopes of Mercy? Will he not become ſo wiſe at leaſt, as to enter into the Conſideration of his Ways, and to look back on the former Courſe of his Life, to examin and compare that with the Law of God by which he muſt be judged? And if we have but Patience to do this, he will have no farther Patience with himſelf, for being guilty of ſuch unſpeakable Folly. He will abhorr himſelf for all his ſenſual and ſinfull Delights; which will turn into the greateſt Bitterneſs and Anguiſh to his Soul; He will lament his Folly and Wickedneſs with the deepeſt ſorrow; and take up ſincere and firm Reſolutions to return no more to the Practiſe of them. And if this be the Reſult, as it ought to be, of all the diſtinguiſhing ſinfull Pleaſures of a *carnal Mind*, I leave it to the moſt impartial Mind to Reſolve whether there will be the leaſt Advantage by purſuing them.

2. But

2. But we have too great Reaſon to ſuppoſe that Men may harden themſelves to ſuch a degree of Wickedneſs, as to be Inſenſible of the Folly of it, and to mock at thoſe who go about to reprove them for it. Such as theſe are at Eaſe, becauſe they have no Senſe of their Condition; but ſo are thoſe in a Lethargy: Is their Caſe therefore to be envied; or compared with thoſe in Health, although more ſenſible of Pain and Danger? Who ſeem to be better pleaſed at ſometimes, and tranſported with their own Imaginations than Men in a Frenzy? and yet no Man thinks their Condition happier for it. There is a ſort of *Moral Frenzy* which poſſeſſes ſome part of Mankind, who, are not only Extravagant in their Actions, but Aſſume ſuch a Degree of Confidence in Committing them, as though the Wiſe Men of all Ages had been the only remarkable Fools in it. But it is no ſuch eaſie matter to Run down the Principles of Vertue and Religion, they have ſtood the Shock of all the Sarcaſms and Reproaches of former Times; and there is ſtill nothing at the Bottom of all the Scorn and Contempt that is caſt upon them: but a *Carnal* and *Profane Temper of Mind*; which may bear them up for a while, but it will be ſure to End in Everlaſting Confuſion; and then they will find what they were ſo unwilling to believe, *That to be Carnally minded is Death.* Not a meer State of Inſenſibility, but the

worſt kind of Death; A Death of perpetual Horrour and Torment; A Death without the Power of Dying, and yet with a perpetual Deſire of it; A Death whoſe Sting can never be taken out; and whoſe Terror is ſaid to be as *everlaſting* as the Joys of Heaven. And ſhall not the Apprehenſion of ſuch a *Death*, as this, ſo dreadfull, ſo unavoidable, ſo inſupportable, make the greateſt Sinners to Tremble, and be Confounded at the Apprehenſion of it? And, if once ſuch Thoughts break into their Minds, farewell then to all the Imaginary Pleaſure and Satisfaction of a Carnal Mind; for it muſt ſink it into the *Confuſion* if not the *Deſpair* of Hell.

(2.) But I have hitherto repreſented the Diſadvantages of one ſide; but are there not ſuch on the other too? Some are too apt to think a *Spiritual Mind* to be nothing but a diſorder'd Fancy, and Melancholy Imaginations of Inviſible things. If this were all, it were ſo far from being *Life and Peace*, that there could be no real Satisfaction about it. But a *Spiritual Mind* is truly the moſt deſirable thing we are capable of in this World. For, it is the beſt Improvement of our Minds, which are *Spiritual*. It is, the purging and refining them from the Droſs and Corruption which debaſed them. It is, the Advancing them towards the Divine Nature, by a gradual Participation of it. It is, the Raiſing them above the Carnal Delights, and

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the ſollicitous Cares and Perplexing Fears of this World; and fitting them for a perpetual Converſation with Divine and Spiritual Objects.

And what then can be more agreeable to the beſt Part of our Selves here, than to have a Mind ſo diſengaged from this World and ſo fit for a better? So that we may be content to take a View of the Worſt which can be ſuppoſed as to Diſadvantage here, which is, that Good Men may be under *Unequal Circumſtances* as to their Condition in this Life; that is, when the Regarding another World more than this, may make their outward Condition more uneaſie here, than it might have been, if they had follow'd only the Dictates of a *Carnal Mind*.

There are two ſorts of Troubles we are to Expect in this World, (1.) Such as we bring upon our Selves by our own Acts: (2.) Such as are common to all Mankind: In both theſe the Spiritual Mind hath the Advantage.

(1.) As to ſuch which men bring upon themſelves. Let this be ſuppoſed, as it ought to be, when God pleaſes among Chriſtians, *who are to follow Chriſt in taking up his Croſs*: Is there any thing in this, which overthrows the Advantage of a *Spiritual Mind* above a *Carnal*? Can a *Carnal Mind* ſecure Men from Pains and Diſeaſes, from Loſſes and Diſappointments? Nay doth not the Purſuit of Carnal Pleaſures bring more Troubles upon Men in this Life, than the Caſe

of

of Perſecution doth upon the beſt Chriſtians? If the Loathſome Diſeaſes, the Reproachfull and Untimely Deaths, which of all things ought to be moſt avoided, by ſuch who believe no Life after this, be compared with the Pains and Martyrdoms of thoſe who have ſuffer'd for their Religion, theſe will appear to be far more Eligible than the other, becauſe the Mind hath far greater Satisfaction under them, and a certain Expectation of an Infinite Reward to follow upon them. Whereas the others can have no Comfort in looking back on what they have done, or forward in what they are to Expect. For they have deſtroy'd their own Happineſs and haſten'd that upon themſelves which they account their only Miſery.

(2.) As to the Common Calamities of Life, which none can prevent or avoid, the *Spiritual Mind* hath very much the Advantage of the *Carnal*; For the one fills them with inward Peace and Satisfaction of Mind, which of all things carry men beſt through the Troubles of Life; being joyned with Patience, Humility, Self-Denial, and Submiſſion to the Will of God; which are all the genuine Effects of a *Spiritual Mind*; but a *Carnal Mind* is froward and impatient, uneaſie to it ſelf and to all about it, and this makes every Pain and Trouble to be much greater than it would have been; like the Aſs in the Fable: which lay down in the Water with his burthen of Wool and ſo made it heavier than before.

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There were two things the Philosophical Men of Pleasure sought to comfort themselves by, under the unavoidable Troubles of Life; which the *Spiritual Mind* hath far greater Advantages than any of them had, as to both of them; and these are *Reflection* and *Expectation*.

(1.) *Reflection*. When *Epicurus* was in his last Agonies under the Stone, what a miserable way was it for him to go about to comfort himself, by Reflecting upon his *Atoms* and his *Maxims*, his Imaginary Notion of the Happiness of Life consisting in Pleasure, when his Life was so near being ended by Excessive Pain? But a Good Man that hath sincerely endeavour'd *to serve God in his Generation*, and to do all the Good he could, and to promote the Interests of Religion and Vertue in the World, may in the midst of many Failings and Infirmities, look back with Comfort on the Course of his former Life, and by the Peace of a Good Conscience may injoy inward Satisfaction, under such Pains and Distempers, which make Life uneasie and Death more welcome, as it is a Passage to a far better State. And that is the next thing.

Epicurus Hermacho. *V.* Ciceron. *de Finibus, l.* 2. *c.* 30.

(2.) *Expectation*. It was a sorrowfull Expectation which *Epicurus* supported himself with, when he was in the Prospect of Death; which was no more, than that the Subtle Atoms which made up his Soul, would soon be scatter'd and dispersed, he knew not where,

and

and then he should be, as if he had never been. But what Comfort is there in such a *Dissolution*? Men that have deserved it, may heartily wish it; but they have deserved something worse, and that they must Expect. For, the just and holy *God*, will certainly call them to an Account for all their Vices and Follies; and *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God*; and what a miserable Case are those in, who have nothing to *look for but Judgment and Fiery Indignation, which shall consume the Adversaries* of God and Religion?

Heb. 10. 31. 27.

But O the Blessed Hope and Joyfull Expectation that attends a *Spiritual Mind*! Especially when it is Enliven'd and Assisted by the Powerfull Influences of Divine Grace. For without that, even Good Men may be liable to some Dejections and Fears as to another World, from the vastness of the Change, the Sense of their Failings, the Weakness of their Minds, and Mistrust of their own Fitness for Heaven; but so great is the Goodness and Mercy of God towards them that sincerely love and fear him, that he always makes their Passage safe, though it be not so Triumphant. And although *the Valley of the Shadow of Death* may seem gloomy and uncomfortable at a Distance; yet when *God* is pleased to Conduct his Servants through it, he makes it a happy Passage into a State of a Glorious Immortality and Everlasting *Life and Peace*. To which God, &c.

FINIS.

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